A

Plain Path-way OPENED

TO THE

SIMPLE-HEARTED,

FOR THE

Answering all Doubts and Objections which do arise in them against the *Light* and *Truth* in the *Inward-Parts*;

BY WHICH

Many are kept from *Obedience*, and so from *Peace* to their

PANTING SOULS.

By Stephen Crisp.

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A Plain Path-way Opened, &c.

Friends and People,

I Have had a deep exercise upon my spirit concerning many who are come to feel something stirring and moving in their hearts (that is good) to bring them into a serious consideration of their course of life, and the inward state of their Immortal Souls; and when you have sometimes begun to turn your minds to this good thing that stirred in you, then have many doubts and objections arisen in you, lest you should be mis-led, deceived, or deluded; and lest this thing that inwardly strives with you should lead you into the Eronious way of the Quakers, (as the Worlds Teachers calls it) for they speak, and write of, and bear a constant Testimony to something that is in man, that calls upon him to repent, and to turn to the Lord; and under this very notion that ye have heard evil, and thought evil of that People; by the same rule you are apt to think evil of that which works in your own bosom to lead you out of Sin and Iniquity; and so ye are tempted to slight it, and to get some slighty name for it, to call it by, which Antichrists Ministers have many to afford you; as to call it, A Natural Light; A Common Gift of the Spirit, but not a Saving Gift; Conviction of a Natural Conscience; A Legal Work; yea, and many calls it, The Devils work to disturb the Soul of its Peace; and some, A Diabolical Light, *&c.* and thus when thou art brought to slight that good Principle (that strives with thee) under some such name, thou gets ease again, for a little while, and takes liberty to act against it, and to do and say that which this Principle doth in secret condemn; and then it riseth again, and breaks thy peace, and brings trouble and anguish upon thy Soul? and then up comes many doubts on the one hand, and doubts on the other hand, and thy poor Soul is beset and encompassed with doubts, and fears, and jealousies; sometimes thou fears thou withstands the Truth to thy own destruction; and sometimes fears again its a delusion, and thou shalt be deceived; and besides thou finds many Learned men, and worldly-wise men, that

that tell thee, that there is nothing good in thee; and here thou art in a great ſtrait, and labours under many ſorowfull thoughts, and many doubtfull diſputations ariſeth in thy mind; the Fleſh now ſtrongly warreth againſt that which comes to diſturb it, and the Spirit ſtrongly warreth againſt that which reſiſts and rebels againſt it, and theſe two are contrary, & theſe contrary things are both in thee, and thou poor Creature muſt feel the ſtrugling of them both; & by reaſon of thy darkneſs, and doubts, and fears, thou ſcarce knows (or at leaſt with certainty) which is right: now, in this ſtate and condition, how acceptable would a Meſſenger be, one of a thouſand, to ſhew unto ſuch a one that which might deliver his Soul from going down into the pit, and ſave his life from the Deſtroyer; (*Job* 33. 23.) And truly very many are in this ſtraitned ſtate in theſe dayes; for whoſe ſakes I am drawn into a deep exerciſe many times, by day, and by night, and my cry to God is, that his glorious Power may more and more ariſe to open theſe doors that are ſhut and folded upon many ſuch, and to bring forth the impriſoned ſpirits out of the Priſon-houſe, and out of the Bondage of this Spiritual *Egypt*, where our Lord was and is crucified Spiritually; and that he may expel the clouds of darkneſs, in which the fears, and doubts, and queſtionings ariſeth; and that he may make a clear way in all ſuch for his Light to break forth out of obſcurity, in which the Anſwer to thoſe Doubts and Queſtions doth ariſe.

And by that ſame ſpirit that labours with you, am I moved to ſend this forth unto you all, as a word of Exhortation and Counſel in the Name and fear of the Lord God, by which as many as do rightly receive it, and make a true uſe and proof of it, ſhall find help and benefit; and ſhall know the mouth of the Queſtioner ſtopped, and the Anſwer of Peace witneſſed to their Immortal Souls, in the Lords due time. And therefore, conſider this, *That every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of Lights and Spirits*, who would not the death of a Sinner, but rather that he ſhould turn and live; and therefore hath he out of his infinite love, and tender mercies to the Sons of Men, prepared a way to draw nigh unto them, even while they are in their Sins, which he doth not but thorow Jeſus Chriſt, the Mediator of the New-Covenant, whom he hath freely given to be a Light unto the dark World; and that he ſhould *Enlighten every one that cometh into the World*, Joh. 1. 9.

of which number thou art one, whoever thou art, and art enlightned by Christ, though thou be yet darkneſs in thy ſelf, as the *Epheſians* once were; yet the Light ſhineth in thy darkneſs, or elſe there would not be two contrary Natures and Seeds found working in thee as there is; and this Light wherewith thou art enlightened is the the *Life of Jeſus*, Joh. 1. 4. which he hath given a Ranſom for man; and that was not Natural, as ſome fooliſhly imagine: for if it were Natural, it could not be a Ranſom for man out of Sin; for the Sin to be Natural, and that which reproves it Natural, is contrary to the Apoſtle, who ſaid, they two that warred in the Creature were contrary; and called the one *Fleſh*, or Natural; and the other *Spirit*, or Spiritual; and Chriſt Jeſus called that which ſhould Reprove the World of Sin, *The Spirit of Truth*; and Antichriſt and his Miniſters calls it, *A Natural inſufficient Light*, &c. But know this, thou that art enquiring, that that in thee which doth make manifeſt things to thee that are reproveable, that's the Light wherewith Chriſt Jeſus hath enlightened thee withal, as the Apoſtle of Chriſt ſaid in his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, chap. 5. v. 13, 14. and that Principle which leads thee to do or ſay ſuch things as thou art ſecretly reproved for in thine own Conſcience, that is the Darkneſs, and the Enemy of thy Souls Peace, which, who walks in, doth not know whither he goeth: for this doth miniſter a peace and pleaſure to thee, and a delight to thy carnal mind for a ſeaſon; yet the other, to wit, the Light, the Reprover hath power to take away peace from thee again, and to judge thee, and to make that which was ſweet to thee to become bitter; and the darkneſs, nor luſt nor vanity of thy mind cannot deliver thee from this ſtroke.

Now, that thou might be reſolved in ſuch a ſtate what to do, conſider, thou that haſt theſe ſtruglings in thee about the Light in thy Conſcience, whether it is true or no, or whether thou ſhalt own it or no, and art thinking in thy ſelf what is beſt for thee to do; whether to go on ſtoutly againſt it, or to ſubmit to it: I ſay, conſider, if thou rebel againſt it, thou can never know whether it would lead thee; as it was ſaid of old, *Job* 24. *They that rebel againſt the Light, they know not the Way of it*; ſo that if thou doſt take that courſe to rebel, that will but increaſe thy ignorance of the Way that the Light leads in, and makes it more terrible to thee every time it doth appear in thee, till thou comeſt to that ſtate ſpoken of,

Job

Job 24. 17. *That the dawning of the Day will be as the shadow of death*; for the more thou rebels against it, the more dark thou wilt daily grow, and so the less able to resolve thy self in those doubtfull things that fill thy mind; but as darkness increaseth in thee, so the power of it will bind thee down, as a Chain, and smother every good desire in thee; and thus by rebellion against the Light, do some men lose the very sence and knowledge of it, and grows past feeling, and strangers to it, though it be in them; for the custom of Sin taketh away the sence and the feeling of the burthen of it; but to you I write that are not yet come to this state of hardness of heart, but are brought daily into a sence of the burthen of Sin; and that are ready to say, if you were but sure that were the Truth and way of God which shews you your Sin, you would follow it, and love it, and own it, but are kept off by doubts and questionings: Verily, I say unto you, before these doubts be resolved you must try this, as, to your sorrow you have tried the other, before you can be effectually informed; for Arguments will not do sufficienly in this case; therefore try and prove what this Principle can do for thee, when thou obeyst it, which ye know hath power to condemn you, and break your Peace when you disobey it: Why should ye always be shut up in unbelief, and in doubts, and so kept from trying and proving the Light, as well as ye have proved the Darkness, that so ye might reap the fruit of it to Salvation, as well as you have done the fruit of the other unto Condemnation? Oh, dear people, consider, ye cannot obey this Light of Christ Jesus in your Consciences, but by taking up a daily Cross to your own Wills, Lusts and Affections, for that is contrary thereunto; and that which leads to obey your Lusts, leads to disobey the Light; and that which leads to obey the Light, that crosseth the Lusts and vile Affections, which are at enmity with the Light, and must by it be judged and condemned; and that which leads thee to slight it, and call it by some slighty name, that's also an Enemy to it, and must be judged by it; and so, as the Light comes to rule over those things in thee, which are enemies to it, thou wilt know that it will lead thee contrary to thy corrupt nature; and as thou feelest the thing so in thy self, thou wilt come to be wiser then those Teachers that have called it a Natural light; for that which is Natural leadeth according to Nature, but that which is Spiritual, leadeth according to the Spirit, which

Apostle

Apoſtle ſaid was contrary to the Fleſh, and warred againſt it; and ſo that objection will, by thy obeying the Light, come to be anſwered, far better then words and arguments could have anſwered it; and ſo likewiſe the ſufficiency of the Light thou wilt come to feel, if thou doſt not oppoſe it, but give up to be guided by it; and wilt know that it is able to deliver thee when thou art tempted, as well as to judge thee when thou haſt yeelded to the Tempter: for thou knowſt already that it is able to condemn thee when thou ſinneſt againſt it; but thou cannot certainly know it ſufficient to give peace, and to juſtifie, till thou obeyeſt it: So then, the plain Path-way to the anſwering thy doubts about the Principle of Truth in the Inward-parts, is, by obeying of it, and yeelding to it; for they that do evil they grow into hatred againſt it, and it judges them; as they deny to obey the Light, ſo the Light denies to juſtifie them, and ſo coming juſtly under the condemnation of it, by reaſon of tranſgreſſion they grow afraid of it: But alas, this doth but prove that it is ſent of God, for it doth Gods work, which is righteous; *For to juſtifie the Wicked, and to condemn the Righteous, both theſe are an abomination to the Lord*; and ſo is it with his Witneſs in thy own Conſcience, which God hath placed there to bear witneſs for him concerning all thy actions whether they are good or evil; and thou thy ſelf, whoever thou art, whether high or low, rich or poor, profeſſor or prophane, ſhalt confeſs unto this, that this hath never condemned thee for that which was good, nor born witneſs againſt thee for that thou waſt not guilty of.

And therefore all you that have been hurried and toſſed with doubts and queſtionings about the Truth, come hearken to the Counſel of God, at this time once more ſounded forth unto you from his Spirit, by a Servant of his without you, and anſwered by the meaſure of his good Spirit within you, which hath the ſame voice and cry in you, for Obedience to what is made manifeſt of God in you; obey the Light, and ye ſhall ſee daily more of it, till it break forth as a morning unto thee, and till it ſhines unto a perfect day; yea, a day of gladneſs and rejoycing to thy poor diſtreſſed Soul.

Oh, Ariſe thou that ſits ſorrowing, and thou that art crying out in ſecret, becauſe of the bonds and fetters that are yet upon thee: Ariſe, ariſe, I ſay in the Name of the Lord God of *Sion*, who

draws

draws nigh to thee by his quickning Spirit, and hearken to his voice, who ſaith to the Priſoner, *Come forth*; and to the bowed down, *Ariſe*; and to the feeble ones, *Put on ſtrength, and follow me; I will confound your Foes, and break the ſtrength of your Enemies, as I have done for my People, who have forſaken all to follow me, and obey me, ſo will I do for you: and if ye in uprightneſs walk before me, and keep my Covant, as they have done, no power or ſtrength of the Enemy within or without ſhall be too hard for you.* And when the Lord doth thus ariſe in your Souls, and ſtir up his own pure Witneſs, and his Arm awakens in you, and his pure Light breaks forth; oh, what conſolation is it to you, and how have many of you ſeen your vain doubtings expelled, and a cleer convincement hath prevailed upon your ſpirits concerning the way of God; and at ſuch a time you have begun to reſolve to follow the Lord in his pure Way of Holineſs, thus opened unto you in the Light, though to the loſs of all; and though it be to the bearing your part of the great reproach that lies upon them that loves him more then their lives; and at ſuch a time there was felt a ſecret joy in a hidden ground in your Souls, and the ſeed of the Kingdom that had been long buried up, began to ſpring up in you, in which Seed your Souls felt ſome touchings of that Heavenly Life and Joy, which for the time exceeded all things that this World could afford; and whenſoever ye come to feel this refreſhing dew upon your Souls, then take heed and wait ſingly in the ſence of it, keep your eye to the joy that is now ſet before you in Chriſt Jeſus, the Seed; for if you let your minds wander, and your eyes gad abroad, there be objects on every hand to lead you out from your Souls beloved, and to bring you to defile your hearts, and make your ſelves an unfit place of reſidence for him who is holy and pure, and will not dwell, nor take delight in a polluted Temple; but will withdraw himſelf, as he did from *Iſrael* of old, and from their Temple, when it was polluted and prophaned: And beſides, when your minds are taken hold of by any of the corruptable things in this changable World, there will preſently kindle a deſiring, longing, and luſting after the enjoyment of thoſe things, though contrary to the will of God; and then next the Reaſoner and Conſulter gets up in thee, and ſtarts a queſtion: May not I enjoy the Lord and this? May not I keep in the Way of Truth, and yet do this or that thing which my heart deſireth? And though

though it be not perfectly according to the Truth made manifeſt in me; yet I will have my will, my luſt, my deſire ſatisfied but this one time, and that's not much, ſaith the Conſulter; and this is but a ſmall matter, there be others that do greater things then this; and ſuch like reaſonings enters the mind, and this grieves and vexeth that good and righteous tender Spirit that moved in thee, and brings a weight and oppreſſion upon the pure in thee, and that withdraws it ſelf again from thee, in which thy Light did ariſe unto thee, and ſo a night comes upon thee; for where the Serpent can bring any to make a queſtion of obeying the Truth, he is as ready to frame an Anſwer, as to beget the Queſtion; but his anſwer alwayes comes with a Liberty and perſwaſion to diſobey, as it did by *Eve* in the beginning; and when tranſgreſſion is finiſhed, then death enters upon thee with its dark power, and manifold ſorrows peirceth thy poor ſoul; though the fruit was deſirable to be eaten, yet now it is eaten, thou cannot come at life, to eat of that too, though thou deſireſt it; but art driven out, and kept out *with a flaming ſword that turns every way againſt thee*: And heres now a ground laid for doubts and queſtioning of a higher nature then before, to ariſe in thee; for before thou doubted of the Truth it ſelf, whether it were the Truth, but now having taſted of it, and received a convincement of it, and yet let forth thy mind from it after other Lovers,-and thy ears after the voice of the Adultereſs, and ſo cauſed the pure Light to withdraw from thee, thorow thy rebellion: now thou deſireſt thou might but ſee again what thou haſt ſeen, and feel again what thou haſt felt, but doubts and fears that thou ſhalt never ſee, nor feel, nor enjoy the like again: and now thou wiſheſt, oh, that thou hadſt ſtood in the croſs to thy own will, and that thou hadſt denied thy ſelf, that thou might not thus have loſt the ſight and ſence of thy Souls Beloved. And now thou ſeeſt, by wofull experience, whence doubts, and fears, and ſorrows do ariſe, even thy joyning with the Enemy, who brings forth reaſons againſt the obedience to the Light: And therefore now hearken to that which remains in thee, though darkneſs and ſorrow doth encompaſs thee; yet there is ſomething remains, which gives thee a ſence of thy ſtate and condition, and makes thee to know thy loſs and want, hear the voice of this, and this will humble thee, and bring thee into true brokenneſs of heart, and contriteneſs of ſpirit; and

as

as thou comes to know that ſtate, then thou haſt ſomething to offer to the Lord of his own preparing, which will be far more acceptable to him then a multitude of words and performances and duties, (ſo called;) and as thou in the true lowlineſs of mind doſt come before the Lord, and offers up this offering, God will hear in Heaven, and will anſwer the cry of the poor and needy Soul that cannot be ſatisfied without his preſence; and he will remember his mercies of old (which never fail) for his ſeed ſake which is not yet brought forth in thee: And when God doth again ſhine forth unto thee, and make his Power known, thou muſt expect it muſt be in judgment, becauſe of the tranſgreſſion thou haſt gone into, that he may conſume that in thee which led thee into the Sin, from his pure Law, which is Light, for *Zion is redeemed by judgment*: And therefore take heed leſt thou be offended at his appearance; take heed that thou limit not the Holy One; but if his appearance be with more ſharpneſs and bitterneſs to the carnal part then before, it is but juſt it ſhould be ſo, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will*. he ſees more cauſe now then before, by how much more thou haſt ſinned againſt his goodneſs; but bow to his Judgments, *Bear his Indignation*, (as *Micah* ſaid) *becauſe thou haſt ſinned againſt them*, Mic 7. 9. And as thou yeeds to his righteous Judgement, thou wilt know the coming to the midſt of them, in which *the mercy is remembred* and made manifeſt; and therefore the haſty and impatient, that flees the Judgment as ſoon as it begins a little to appear in them, they never find the true deliverance, but gets eaſe another way, which laſteth but for a moment; but they who comes to know a thorow work wrought in their Earth, and the Floor thorowly purged, they come to know the true and laſting Peace to their Immortal Souls; and although this is not obtained by eaſe and liberty to the carnal mind, which muſt die, yet the end Crowns all that holds out to it, they are the ſaved ones, as Chriſt ſaid, *Mark* 13. 13. and they find the returning with ſhaves, as the Prophet ſaid, *Pſal.* 126. 5, 6. *They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in Joy: They went forth* (ſaid he) *with weeping, and bearing precious Seed, but they ſhall return with joy, and bring their Sheaves*: And as Chriſt ſaid, *They that forſake father and mother, wife and children, houſe or lands, yea, or their own lives for my ſake, ſhall have an hundred fold in this time, and in the World to come Life*

Everlasting: Forsaking and Self-denial hath alwayes been the way to Life, and to true Blessedness, and is the way unto this day. And therefore all you who have wandered in your own ways, and have not yet learned to deny your selves of what is contrary to the Witness of God in your Consciences, but have desires, and that strong ones too, to keep and hold that still which the Light in you doth reprove, and yet have desires of Life and Peace too; and so are in many doubts and straits about these things; to you all this is the Counsel of the Lord, and the cry of his pure Spirit; Come out of the Babylonish confusion of your own thoughts, and touch not that which is unclean, and the Lord will receive you; and what God by his pure Spirit hath called unclean, let no man presume to call clean, and to joyn to it, lest they be found fighting against God, and nourishing, and keeping that alive which God hath appointed to die and be destroyed; ye cannot serve two Masters, nor partake of the Table of the Lord and the Table of Devils. Oh, feed not that birth that hungers after evil things, and delights in them; but what is for famine, let it be famished; and what is for the Sword, let the two edged Sword that goeth out of the mouth of the faithfull and true Witness cut it down, (*Rev.* 1. 16. and 3. 14.) and so thou may see the Giants in the Land slain before thee by one that is mighty to deliver, and to bring thee out of this Spiritual *Egypt* with a high hand: but this thou cannot come to witness, but by diligent following him, and if thou willingly yeelds to his gentle drawings when thou feelst them in thy heart, thou wilt find them to be effectual and profitable to thy Soul, and the more thou follows him, the more thou wilt feel his goodness break in upon thee for thy encouragement, and the less thou wilt doubt of his love and mercy in leading thee still farther, even unto the end, and unto that Rest which will satisfie thy Soul.

Therefore lay aside all Consultations that are against thy Obedience to the Gift of God in thy heart, which reproves Sin in thee; and give not way to vain and needless doubts about it, but as thou findst that thou hast been condemned and judged in thy disobeying of it; now try and prove whether by taking up thy daily cross, and obeying of it in thy words and actions, and in all things, if thou dost not find the answer of sweet peace and joy; and when thou shalt

find

find it ſo, then will there be no more room for doubts and queſtioning againſt thy obeying of it; but as any queſtions or doubts doth ariſe in thee, or ſhall be caſt in thy way by any without thee, thou wilt feel the anſwer of it in thy ſelf to thy refreſhing, and ſo thou wilt come to witneſs the effectual opperation of it daily in thy Soul to work thy change and tranſlation out of thy ſelf into it ſelf, and ſo thou wilt come not only to know the Light in thee; for that one may do and periſh, *(For this is the Condemnation, that Light is come, and not loved)* but thou wilt know that thou art in the Light, and walkeſt there with God, and in the holy Fellowſhip, where thou feelſt the Lord near thee in his Light, and his Reward is with him: and ſo coming to walk and dwell in the Light, thy converſation is now in Heaven, as the Saints of old was, and thy unity is witneſſed *with the Father and the Son*, as theirs was, who ſaid, *If we walk in the Light as he is in the Light, they had fellowſhip with him; and if any ſaid they had fellowſhip, and walked in Darkneſs* (which all Sinners do, for Sin is the work of it) *ſuch*, they ſaid, *were Lyars:* And ſuch as walks in the Light, as he is in the Light, ſuch comes to know the Blood that cleanſeth and waſheth from the Sin, and from all unrighteouſneſs; and ſuch as feels this work wrought in them are brought into ſuch a knowledge of the blood of Chriſt, that they need not doubt about it, nor have no occaſion to raiſe a queſtion, where it is, or what it is, nor what the efficacy of it is; for having the work and witneſs of the Blood in them, this forthwith reſolves all doubts that would ariſe; and ſo likewiſe thoſe that comes to know the Light in all things to be their Guide to lead out of Darkneſs, and Sin, and Imperfections, and to bring into the Innocent and Blameleſs Converſation which becometh Saints, and ſo come to know their footſteps directed before the Lord, ſuch have done doubting and queſtioning about Perfection; for ſuch ſees that which is perfect to be come, and they from the belief which they have of attaining it, are labouring to conform themſelves unto that rule, and endeavouring after it not as the carnal Profeſſors, (who ſay they labour after a Conqueſt over their Sins, with a belief they ſhall never attain it while they live;) but they ſo run that they may attain, and have the true hope in them, which they that have, are purifying themſelves as he is pure, that is their hope, as *John* ſaid,

He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself as God is pure, that so, *Even as he was in this present World, so they may be also*: and so here the Substance will come, and will cause the shadow to flee, and will answer all thy Doubts and Questions far beyond what Arguments can do.

And again, the many doubts and disputations that have arisen about the Resurrection, as thou comest to be faithfull in the daily Cross, that doth slay and crucifie that nature in thee that hath resisted the Truth, and held the Seed in bondage; as that comes to die, and to be buried down in the true Baptism into Christs Death, thou wilt feel the Pure to spring up in thee, and thou wilt be made a partaker of the new Life, and the true Resurrection, which is Christ, and all that are in him are in the Resurrection, and in the Life; for he said, *I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live*; and this living to God, in the Spirit of his Son, is the first Resurrection, which whomsoever comes to witness, the second death hath no power over them, but they come to know the thing as it is in Jesus, and their doubts are all answered about that also; for he that knows a death and Resurrection after this manner, *To be dead to Sin, and to be risen with Christ Jesus in the new Life*, even while they are in this earthly Tabernacle, before it is dissolved, such will never question their appearing at the Judgment Seat of God after it is dissolved, but do believe it with joy and gladness; and hath a fervent hope concerning the Resurrection of the dead, and have their expectation unto God in that matter, that he will, according to his Promise, raise them up at the last day, and will give unto every Seed his own Body, even as pleaseth him; and the Creature is not carefull then about such foolish questions and doubts, as to enquire what manner of body God will give them, but leaves it to the Lord in full faith that he will raise them up, according to the Scriptures: and so here all thy doubts will flee away, and are answered with that that was before them, as it comes to rule in the Creature, and Death that is the root and ground of them comes to be swallowed up in the Victory of the Life.

And so, as thou feels thy part in this Resurrection, all the doubts and fears of thy own condition will be answered effectually, which can-

cannot otherwiſe be anſwered, but by that good Spirit of God that ſtrives with thee, which, when it doth prevail with thee, and thou becomes ſubject to it, then it witneſſeth for thee; for that there is a ſtate in which there is a danger of falling away, thy daily experience teacheth thee to thy ſorrow; and beſides, Chriſt ſaid, *Every Branch in me that beareth not fruit muſt be cut off*; and the many examples in Scripture of them that departed from the Faith, and made ſhipwrack of it, and turned with the Dog to the vomit, and the Sow to the mire, doth ſufficiently prove it; and if thou doſt ſtand, it is by Faith, and thou muſt take heed, and ſo mayſt thou come to the Crown, and Seal, and Aſſurance, and an Eſtabliſhment in the Kingdom, where thou ſhalt no more go forth, but ſhalt have thy Souls deſire anſwered.

And when thou comeſt to know this ſtate, and to receive this White Stone that hath the Name within, thou wilt then be without doubt or fear, given up in the will of God to do and to ſuffer all things, according to his bleſſed will: and here is the true and perfect Reſt to thy Soul whoever thou art, that art now labouring in the Iron Furnace of thy own thoughts and doubts, in the which the more thou giveſt thy ſelf up thereto, the darker thou art, and the fuller of doubts; for they will beget and multiply one another; and the more thou reaſons againſt obeying Gods Witneſs in thy heart, the leſs able thou art to obey it, but the little ſtrength which God gives thee, thou conſults it away, and then when thou wouldſt be ſtrong thou becom'ſt feeble; and when thou wouldſt in ſome meaſure obey, thy own conſultations ſtands in the way, and hinders thee; and the more thou increaſeſt in knowledge in this ſtate, the more thou increaſeſt thy ſorrow and condemnation; ſo that ſometimes thou art ready to wiſh thou had never known ſo much of Truth; and ſometimes wiſhes thou knew more concerning ſuch a Point, or ſuch a Doctrine, or ſuch a Scripture, or ſuch a Myſtery, and art apt to think, becauſe thou art yet ignorant in ſome things relating to Truth, therefore thou art the more excuſable if thou be diſobedient: but alas, poor ſoul, conſider, the way to know more is to be obedient to a little which thou haſt received, and then that miſt and fog of thy own unfaithfulneſs will vaniſh away from before the eye of thy mind; for it is that

which

which hinders good things from thee, and mak'ſt thee go daily with a burthen upon thy ſhoulders, and a guilt upon thy Conſcience, and thou canſt not, in no caſe of thy neceſſities, come before the Lord with an open face, but art covered ſtill with thine own iniquities; and in this ſtate thou knoweſt neither Sabbath, nor new Moon, nor Holy-day to the Lord; but all labour, toyl and travel, and wearieſomneſs of ſpirit, till many even comes to wiſh an end of their dayes, and yet are in great fear that the end will be worſe too. Oh, how my Soul pitties you whoſe ſtate this is, and I have a great ſympathy with your ſorrows, and in bowels of tender love am I drawn forth to reach out a hand to help you, as one that hath obtained mercy to know deliverances, and to witneſs the way of it, and have the teſtimony of God in my heart to witneſs forth the coming of the Saviour to the poor and needy Souls, to the relieving of them, and comforting of them; and my Souls deſire is, that your bonds might be broken, and your Souls might eſcape; but this I ſay, in the Name of the Lord, to you all, there is no way for your deliverance but your giving up in ſingle obedience to that faithfull and true Witneſs of God which ſtirs and moves in thee againſt thy ſins; and therefore wait thou to feel thy mind and will ſubjected thereunto, that thou mayſt feel thy ſelf to be one of thoſe willing people, in this the day of Gods Power; and ceaſe from thy reaſonnings againſt thy obeying the Truth, and from ſaying thou cannot, thou wants power, and when God gives thee Grace then thou wilt obey, for theſe ſayings are in vain; for though it is true none can obey the Lord but by his Grace and Power given unto them, yet he hath made his Grace, *even that which bringeth Salvation, to appear unto all men,* as in *Titus* 2. 11. and it hath appeared unto thee, and in thee to whom I write, and is a Reprover in thee, and thou muſt turn to that that ſmites thee, and then thou turns to the Grace of God; for its his Grace that ſtrives with thee to lead thee out of the evil that it reproves in thee, and ſo out of the World that lies in the evil, up to God from whence the Grace cometh; for whoſoever doth give up to the drawings of the good Spirit of God that moves in them, and in obedience thereto do deny themſelves of their own wills, and luſts, and evil deſires, and pleaſures, ſuch wants not power, but feels him

near

near them that works the willingneſs firſt, and then the deed according to his pleaſure, and ſo the glory comes alone to be his; and then thou knoweſt the Myſtery of the Croſs, and how it is *the Power of God*, which all that rejects the Croſs complains for want of: And ſo, ſo long as thou liveſt in the Croſs thou liveſt in the Power, and thy obeying is eaſie, and all things are poſſible to thee thorow it; and as long as thou art daily dying to that which is corruptible, thou feeleſt the more Life, and Joy and pleaſure in that which is Everlaſting, and thy deſires grow more and more fervent, after a full and perfect injoyment of it, in the pure unity of Spirit: And thoſe deſires growing ſtrong in thee, it grows a lighter thing to thee to part with that which hinders, though it be thy boſom ſins, thy Delilahs and Darlings, yet all muſt go for the love thou haſt to Truth; and ſuch only as have this love, and continue in it, are counted worthy to be Heirs of the Kingdom of God; for ſo long as any thing be hugged and loved beſides the Lord, if the Lord ſhould manifeſt his Love to thee, thou would play the Harlot, and abuſe his Mercies, and cleave to thy old Lovers, as *Iſrael* of old did, that was after the Fleſh: and therefore, think it not ſtrange to be brought thorow manifold tryals, that thereby thou mayſt be purged and prepared as a Bride for the true Husband Chriſt Jeſus; for there is many that deſires acquaintance with him, but are not fitted for him; they muſt be waſhed firſt, and trimmed firſt, and muſt put off the vile Raiment firſt, and muſt come to know the white Linnen put on; and while this work is doing, what need of patience and quietneſs of Spirit is there; what need of ſubjection to the workings of that holy Spirit in all things, that thou may not be ſetting limits and bounds to that which muſt bound and limit thee in all things; nor ſay in thine heart, if my trials were but ſo, or my exerciſes ſo or ſo, I could then bear them; but rather ſubmit in all things willingly to do and ſuffer, and to be tried and exerciſed, even as it pleaſe the Lord to order, or ſuffer thee to be tried; and in all his dealings ſay, with the good man, *It is the Lord, let him do what he will with thee*; and whoſoever gives up thus to him, though he ſlay them, yet ſhall they live; though he wound them, yet he will heal them again: Therefore learn patience and ſtilneſs of mind, for by taking thought thou can add no thing

thin[illegible]is work: I Remember *Israel* of old, who were commanded to ſtand ſtill to ſee the Salvation of God in their greateſt ſtraits, and they were a figure unto thee; and now in the Light read thy figure, and wait for the Subſtance, the true Seed, that it may bring forth peace and reſt to thy Immortal Soul, and may ſet up righteouſneſs in thy Earth; which is that I travel after, on the behalf of all diſtreſſed and afflicted Souls every where, to whom I am a Friend and well-wiſher, as one knowing their trials, ſtraits, doubts and beſettings; and alſo, thorow the rich love of God in Chriſt Jeſus, do witneſs the delivering, anſwering and ſatisfying Life made manifeſt and revealed in its own Eternal Light, *which lighteth every man*; and in true deſire that you may all know the ſame, and in diſcharge of my duty towards God and my Generation, have I ſent forth this word of Counſel and Exhortation, and do remain in my Reſt with the Lord, being thus far clear of the Blood of all men, whether they hear or forbear; and though in Bonds for the Goſpels ſake, yet the Lords Free-man, waiting in patience and full aſſurance for *Zion*'s full Redemption.

Ipſwich *County-Goal this 3d Moneth*, 1668.

Known by the name,

Stephen Criſp.

THE END.